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Chair: Mr. Haniff Hussein ..... (Malaysia)

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda item 65: Promotion and protection of the rights of children (*continued*)

(a) Promotion and protection of the rights of children (*continued*) (A/66/227, A/66/228, A/66/230, A/66/256 and A/66/257)

(b) Follow-up to the outcome of the special session on children (*continued*) (A/66/258)

1. **Mr. Zeidan** (Observer for Palestine) said that, due to the continuing Israeli occupation, there had been little progress towards achieving children's rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. Palestinian children had been killed, and hundreds had been illegally imprisoned and detained. Homes were raided at night, and children were seized and photographed in so-called mapping exercises.

2. Demolitions and evictions left Palestinian children homeless, and the destruction of roads leading to schools had an impact on children's access to school and on their safety. A primary school for the Bedouin community near Jerusalem and a kindergarten in the northern part of the West Bank had received demolition orders. In one village, 97 per cent of the structures had received demolition orders, including homes, the mosque and the village's sole medical centre.

3. The number of lethal and violent attacks by settlers against Palestinians, including children, had increased. Recently, an Israeli settler had intentionally struck and run over an eight-year-old boy, with utter impunity.

4. Children living in the Gaza Strip endured the harsh consequences of Israel's illegal blockade. Freedom of movement was violated, and access to essential supplies was denied. Palestinian children were awakened by the sound of Israeli warplanes firing indiscriminately on their villages and towns. Israel was deliberately delaying reconstruction of schools destroyed in 2008 and 2009. The international community should hold Israeli forces accountable for crimes committed against Palestinian children.

5. **Mr. Buckley** (Observer for the Sovereign Military Order of Malta) said that, while child mortality was at an all-time low, it must be reduced nearly sixfold in order to reach Millennium Development Goals targets. Four out of five early childhood deaths were attributable to preventable diseases and malnutrition. The Order of Malta had successful programmes to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV in Latin America, Asia, Africa and elsewhere. In parts of Mexico, the Order's efforts to save children from HIV/AIDS had prevented transmission of the virus to more than 600 children. The Order also had malaria and tuberculosis prevention and treatment programmes. The Order had 32 mother-child health centres in Myanmar that provided more than 9,000 malnourished children with meals each day and taught mothers about nutrition. It had similar projects in many other countries and was providing staple foods to people at risk of famine in northern Kenya.

6. At its Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem, the Order provided intensive care for premature infants and had delivered over 50,000 babies since 1989, for families of all religions. The Order had programmes in many countries to ensure access to safe water close to home, in order to reduce girls' workloads.

7. **Mr. Young** (International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)) said that armed conflict and other violence were a leading cause of disability in children. Some 1 million children had been disabled as a result of the conflict in Afghanistan, largely owing to disregard for international humanitarian law, including the requirement to distinguish between civilians and combatants. Children in some 80 countries were at constant risk due to landmines, cluster bombs, unexploded ordnance and improvised explosive devices, which continued to affect people long after war ended.

8. Indirect effects of armed conflict, such as the collapse of health-care systems or difficult access to health care, caused children's health to suffer. As a result, simple diseases were left untreated and led to permanent disabilities. In areas affected by armed conflict, many children were born with disabilities because women had limited access to proper care and decent conditions during pregnancy and delivery. Attacks on health facilities, personnel and vehicles were committed with utter disregard for international humanitarian law. Violence that prevented access to health care, one of the most serious humanitarian issues of the day, was often overlooked. The International Committee of the Red Cross endeavoured to persuade all parties to conflicts to respect international humanitarian law. That included respect for medical services.

9. The Committee supported the delivery of emergency care for persons wounded in conflict and in many areas where there were landmines and weapons. It also provided access to physical rehabilitation. In 2010, there had been more than 200,000 beneficiaries of such programmes, including some 56,000 children.

10. Disabled children were particularly vulnerable in armed conflict. For children with disabilities, attending school in situations of conflict was often impossible, reducing the chances of their playing a full role in their societies.

11. **Ms. Klein Solomon** (International Organization for Migration (IOM)) said that her Organization worked to reduce trafficking in children and provided victim assistance. The rights of unaccompanied migrant children must be protected regardless of their legal status in the country of destination, and such protection must be child-specific. In situations of armed conflict, children sometimes found themselves unaccompanied outside their country of origin. Special consideration should be given to the safe return of children who had fled conflicts. Effective cross-border coordination was crucial.

12. **Mr. Motter** (Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)) said that women and children must be made aware of the right of children to affordable, quality health care, enshrined in various international instruments. Legal barriers to its achievement must be removed, and resources for its realization must be allocated.

13. The Inter-Parliamentary Union provided training for members of parliaments and supported national initiatives to provide universal access to health services by all women and children. There was an increasing number of parliamentary initiatives to enforce the right to health care. The Bern Initiative for Global Parliamentary Action on Maternal and Child Health, established in 2010 by women speakers of parliament, contained a strong global commitment to achieving Millennium Development Goals 4 and 5. The Initiative included a commitment to support measures for maternal and newborn health. The Inter-Parliamentary Union had launched a parliamentary dialogue that would culminate in a resolution recommending parliamentary action in support of women's and children's health, including adequate funding, changes to national health policies and oversight for improved service delivery.

14. **Mr. Cassidy** (International Labour Organization (ILO)) said that, while the number of child labourers had declined from 222 million in 2004 to 215 million in 2008, that in fact represented a slowing in the global pace of reduction. The Hague Global Child Labour Conference, held in 2010, had adopted a road map to eliminate the worst forms of child labour by 2016. ILO Conventions No. 138 concerning the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment and Work and No. 182 concerning the Worst Forms of Child Labour should be universally ratified, and the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work should be realized in full. A special emphasis on Africa that would mainstream child labour interventions in programmes and budgets was called for. Governments had primary responsibility for eliminating child labour.

15. In Africa, the root causes of child labour had been compounded by armed conflict and natural disaster, leading to displacement, destruction of livelihoods and schools and the use of child soldiers. Sustainable livelihood opportunities were key to protecting children from exploitation, crime, violence and re-recruitment.

16. Efforts to combat child trafficking involved increasing the knowledge base on trafficking in the context of warfare and improved monitoring and law enforcement. National surveys and data collection initiatives were under way in Sierra Leone and other countries affected by conflict. Such work supported ongoing ILO efforts to advance policy planning and intervention design against child labour in post-conflict countries. The results of its national survey in Liberia would be published before the end of 2011.

17. To mark the World Day against Child Labour in 2011, ILO had issued a report entitled *Children in hazardous work: What we know, what we need to do.*

Agenda item 66: Indigenous issues (A/66/288)

(a) Indigenous issues

(b) Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People

18. **Ms. Bas** (Director of the Social Policy and Development Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs) applauded the recent decisions of the Governments of Canada and the United States to support the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The 2009 decisions by the Governments of

Australia and New Zealand to support the Declaration were also significant. The Declaration had obtained universal support.

19. Many indigenous peoples had been displaced and uprooted. Their natural resources were under threat, many of their languages were dying out and often their very survival was in question. The majority of the world's indigenous people lived in deplorable conditions and had shorter lifespans and higher rates of infant and maternal mortality than did other people. The midterm assessment of the progress made in the achievement of the goal and objectives of the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (A/65/166) which the Secretary-General had submitted to the General Assembly in 2010 demonstrated alarming implementation gaps.

20. Through the Trust Fund on Indigenous Issues, Samburu women elders had shared traditional forest management knowledge with indigenous youth in Kenya; indigenous communities in Cambodia had strengthened their marketing and financial management skills; and indigenous peoples in Nicaragua had improved access to justice.

21. The General Assembly had decided that in 2014 it would organize a World Conference on Indigenous Peoples to share perspectives and best practices on realization of the rights of indigenous people. Full and inclusive participation of indigenous people in the preparations, negotiations and outcome of the World Conference would be crucial to its success.

22. **Mr. Anaya** (Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous peoples), presenting his report on the rights of indigenous peoples (A/66/288), said that he had worked to advance legal, administrative and programmatic reforms at the national and international levels. In Ecuador, he had offered input on a bill to coordinate the State and indigenous justice systems. In Suriname, he had provided orientation on measures needed to secure the land and resource rights of indigenous and tribal peoples, in light of binding decisions by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

23. In addition to numerous country visits, country reports and responses to allegations of violations of rights, he had issued reports on indigenous people affected by mining projects in Guatemala and hydroelectric projects in Costa Rica and Panama and on a violent conflict in Peru between police and indigenous people. His reports to the Human Rights Council had examined the duty of States to consult with indigenous people; the responsibility of corporations to respect human rights; the need to obtain free, prior and informed consent of indigenous people before moving ahead with initiatives; and confidence-building measures. His report on corporate responsibility had discussed the due diligence corporations must exercise when engaging in or planning activities that would affect indigenous people, including identifying how indigenous peoples might be affected by the proposed activities; respecting indigenous peoples' rights to land and resources; carrying out impact studies; and establishing mitigation measures and benefit-sharing.

24. He had examined situations in which extractive industry activities had infringed on indigenous rights, observing the sometimes catastrophic impact of extractive industries on the rights of indigenous peoples. He had seen negligent projects implemented without proper guarantees or the involvement of the people concerned. He had examined situations related to extractive industries that had erupted into violence.

25. A lack of understanding about key issues related to extractive industries among all actors was a major barrier to the effective protection and realization of indigenous peoples' rights. There were significant legal and policy gaps and a lack of coherence in standards related to extractive activities worldwide. The issue of extractive industries would therefore be a major focus of the remainder of his mandate. He planned to hold expert meetings and consultations with indigenous people, States and business enterprises around the world and launch an online consultation forum on issues related to extractive industries. At the same time, he would continue to consider the broad range of issues affecting indigenous peoples and monitor States' compliance with international human rights obligations.

26. **Mr. Ulibarri** (Costa Rica) said that the Supreme Court of Costa Rica had been discussing how to incorporate into domestic law ILO Convention No. 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries. The Government welcomed the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on appropriate procedures and consultations in connection with the El Diquís hydroelectric project. The Government was aware of the importance of making it

possible for the indigenous peoples to defend their way of life through proper representation. Domestic human rights provisions were also applicable.

27. **Mr. Tagle** (Chile) said that the critical situation of indigenous peoples in his country had been resolved owing to flexibility on the part of the representatives of those peoples, the Government, civil society and the Catholic Church who had acted as mediators. The Ministry of Planning had recently decided to hold consultations with indigenous people to ensure compliance with ILO Convention No. 169 and the Declaration.

28. **Ms. Taracena Secaira** (Guatemala) said that the Special Rapporteur had provided guidelines for avoiding confrontations in areas of Guatemala where extraction activities were taking place. She wondered how to ensure that consultations were not deadlocked. There must be more legal certainty with regard to the consultations. Information on future steps to ensure success would be welcome.

29. **Mr. de Séllos** (Brazil) said that his country's domestic law addressed some of the provisions covered in the Declaration. New ways of having dialogue with and defending the rights of indigenous peoples were needed. A seminar on consultation would be held in Brasilia in December. Corporations must respect the rights of indigenous peoples, especially the right to life.

30. **Mr. Archondo** (Plurinational State of Bolivia) asked the Special Rapporteur to share his views on how the World Conference should be organized, what modalities should be planned for the participation of indigenous people and the possible outcome of the Conference.

31. **Mr. De Léon Huerta** (Mexico) said that, while the Special Rapporteur would strengthen coordination between his mandate, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, each of those entities had a specific mandate. The mandates were complementary.

32. Immigration laws affected some indigenous peoples in their traditional movements, with the border between the United States and Mexico dividing some peoples. More details on how to address that issue were requested. Finally, were current arrangements within the United Nations adequate to ensure the broadest possible participation by indigenous peoples in all international agenda issues affecting them?

33. **Ms. Tschampa** (Observer for the European Union) asked for further information on the roles of the Special Rapporteur and of the Permanent Forum and the Expert Mechanism and wished to know how States and other stakeholders could assist in order to achieve optimum cooperation among them. Information on the most important obstacles to implementation of the Declaration would also be welcome. She wondered what new programmes of technical and financial assistance should be established to implement the Declaration and reform existing programmes and how existing programmes should be reformed. The Special Rapporteur was also invited to share his views on how to find common ground among various actors in the context of extractive projects.

34. **Ms. Arias** (Peru) said that her country had recently promulgated a law on prior consent that was fully in accordance with ILO Convention No. 169. In that connection she wished to hear the Special Rapporteur's views on how to make prior consultation mechanisms more effective.

35. **Ms. Medal** (Nicaragua), noting the Special Rapporteur had referred to her country in his report as an example of good practice with respect to title to ancestral lands and resources, confirmed her Government's commitment to continue restoring rights to indigenous peoples and renewed its invitation to Mr. Anaya to continue working with her country to develop good practices for addressing indigenous peoples' issues.

36. **Mr. Anaya** (Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous peoples), speaking in response to questions and comments by delegates, urged countries which had not yet responded to his requests for invitations, especially some countries in Asia, to consider those requests favourably.

37. With regard to the hydroelectric dam project in Costa Rica, he looked forward to building a consultation procedure as laid out in the recommendations in his report. Both the Government and indigenous peoples had indicated acceptance of the main components of the recommendations.

38. It was necessary to build confidence prior to entering into a discussion with indigenous people on

any particular measures. Indigenous peoples had experienced oppression for centuries that had created distrust. Therefore, at the early stages of any consultation, there must be open discussion free from any kind of pressure. Indigenous people must be allowed to express their concerns freely and openly and must be involved in the design of the initiative from the earliest stage. Much patience was required on the part of all concerned. Indigenous peoples might have long-standing issues related to land and resource rights that had to be resolved before any development project could go forward. Initiatives to develop resources on lands where there was no land tenure security created considerable discontent.

39. Indigenous people needed unfiltered information. They should be regarded as equals, capable of understanding information on their own. They should gain access to relevant expertise where necessary. To promote implementation of the Declaration, the international community should support capacity-building, not only on such topics as requesting funding, accessing grievance procedures and understanding the Declaration, but in technical fields, such as business administration and other subjects which indigenous people confronted regularly. Government actors should also benefit from capacity-building to better understand issues of concern to indigenous peoples. Government officials were often oblivious to the standards that applied or should apply to indigenous issues.

40. In order to participate in meetings at the United Nations, indigenous people had to borrow credentials from a non-governmental organization or form one and obtain accreditation from the Economic and Social Council. That caused symbolic and substantive problems for indigenous peoples. They had their own authority structures, which were not representatives of civil society organizations but rather the authorities of indigenous Governments. Mechanisms must be developed that allowed them to participate as Government authorities.

41. The Declaration affirmed the right of indigenous peoples to participate in all levels of decision-making through their own representative institutions. Those rights should be recognized within the United Nations, and new modalities of participation should emerge from the World Conference in 2014. The Declaration required reflection, resolve and energy on the part of all stakeholders for its provisions to be realized.

42. **Ms. Coye-Felson** (Belize), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that CARICOM member States were working to ensure equal representation of indigenous peoples in governance and decision-making. The contributions of indigenous peoples to national prosperity through sharing of traditional knowledge on biodiversity, crop productivity and conservation were acknowledged. Their social and cultural institutions were encouraged, while their engagement in the larger society was supported as well.

43. However, failure to achieve the Millennium Development Goals owing to the economic crisis would have a disproportionate impact on indigenous peoples, who represented about one third of the world's poorest and most marginalized people. Indigenous women and girls suffered from multiple forms of discrimination and were most frequently subjected to extreme poverty, illiteracy, lack of access to land, non-existent or poor health care and violence.

44. Society at large was continuously educated on the historic importance of the region's indigenous populations and also on their contributions. Policies were implemented to support self-government of and by indigenous peoples. The Declaration created no new special rights separate from the universal fundamental human rights, but it elaborated upon them in the specific cultural, historical, social and economic circumstances of indigenous peoples.

45. **Ms. Tschampa** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Croatia, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia; as well as Georgia and the Republic of Moldova, said that the European Union particularly welcomed the decision of the Permanent Forum to emphasize violence against women and girls at its next meeting. It noted with appreciation the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur in his report regarding consensual decision-making in the context of the duty to consult and the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights recently adopted by the Human Rights Council, which highlighted specific challenges in relation to indigenous peoples.

46. The European Union recognized the valuable contribution by indigenous peoples to sustainable

development and biological diversity. Indigenous issues were mainstreamed in EU development programmes and policies. The European Union had financed 32 projects worldwide in 2007-2009, amounting to nearly 8 million dollars, to ensure inclusion of indigenous peoples in decision-making. It provided substantial support to develop the potential of the Arctic region in the European Union and neighbouring areas, including through international cooperation in business, education, natural resources and cultural heritage.

47. **Ms. Calcinari Van Der Velde** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that colonization of the Americas by Europeans had resulted in the greatest holocaust and human rights violations in the history of humanity, including the killing of 80 million indigenous people. Since the revolution in Venezuela, 12 years earlier, the rights of indigenous communities, including recognition and protection of their culture and identity, had been a priority. An entire section of the Constitution was dedicated to indigenous issues, and there were 46 national laws on the subject.

48. Education was multilingual, with textbooks translated into indigenous languages. There was an indigenous university. Health and development policy were implemented in consultation with indigenous communities and included training for indigenous medical specialists.

49. Collective land ownership was recognized in her country, and demarcation was carried out with the participation of indigenous people. Natural resource use by the State in indigenous habitats was implemented without prejudice to the cultural, social and economic integrity of indigenous peoples and was subject to prior consultation. Local, State and national elected bodies had significant indigenous representation.

50. **Ms. Medal** (Nicaragua) said that her country's legislation enshrined the autonomous status of indigenous peoples and people of African descent, as well as collective land ownership for indigenous communities. Measures had been taken to reverse the historical exclusion experienced by minorities and to promote their human rights.

51. Despite the economic crisis and poverty inherited from the previous neoliberal leadership, much was being done to improve living standards for indigenous people. Nicaragua had adopted ILO Convention No. 169 in 2010, and, in the context of Central American integration, the Government of Nicaragua had proposed a regional plan of action for the participation of indigenous communities and communities of African descent in the integration process. Meetings had been held between Government representatives and indigenous leaders from the Pacific coast and northern and central Nicaragua to establish a programme of work for indigenous people in those regions and raise awareness of the Declaration and ILO Convention No. 169. The national school curriculum was taught in indigenous languages and school primers were available in those languages.

52. **Ms. Nemroff** (United States of America) said that her Government had numerous initiatives to respond to the concerns of indigenous leaders and was strengthening the Government-to-Government relationship, protecting the environment, providing redress, addressing health-care gaps, promoting sustainable economic development and protecting cultures.

53. Tribes in the United States participated in and benefited from natural resources development as beneficial owners of resources and as regulators. Tribes were beneficial owners of timber, energy and mineral resources in Indian country.

54. Under federal law, tribes were more than just a constituency. They were part of a larger process that addressed historical and cultural concerns, providing protection that was independent of the Government-to-Government relationship that the United States had with tribes.

55. **Mr. Talbot** (Guyana) said that indigenous people represented 9 per cent of the population in his country and were the fastest-growing segment of the population. Two Government ministers were indigenous, as were 10 out of 65 members of the National Assembly. Indigenous peoples held permanent title to 14 per cent of Guyana's territory.

56. The Amerindian Act of 2006, the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs and an Indigenous Peoples Commission were among the mechanisms established to address indigenous issues. A key objective was the continuous training of indigenous people to take up teaching and other positions in their communities. The provision of school uniforms and free meals had boosted school attendance in communities where large numbers of indigenous people lived.

57. National poverty eradication efforts included a focus on improving the conditions of indigenous peoples. Microcredit schemes and grants facilitated economic investment in remote communities. Programmes to reduce carbon emissions and fight climate change contained economic development components which would benefit indigenous peoples.

58. **Ms. Morgan** (Mexico) welcomed the mandate extension of the Trust Fund on Indigenous Issues to allow participation of indigenous representatives in the work of the Human Rights Council. Mexico provided resources for the Fund and encouraged other States to do the same.

59. There must be effective participation of indigenous representatives during conferences. The forthcoming report of the Secretary-General on actions to broaden indigenous participation would be received with interest. The modalities for indigenous participation in the World Conference set for 2014 should be determined as soon as possible. Participation should take place through indigenous peoples' representative institutions. Decision-making was not only a fundamental right, but also the cornerstone for effective enjoyment of all other rights.

60. The Permanent Representative of Mexico had invited indigenous experts and organizations in the Permanent Forum to participate in the Second International Technical Workshop of Indigenous Peoples and States on negotiations for the Framework of the United Nations on Climate Change Conference in Oaxaca, Mexico. Participants had included indigenous people from many regions, representatives of various Governments, the President of the Group of 77 and China and the Presidents of the sixteenth and seventeenth Conferences of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP-16 and COP-17). Indigenous proposals would be published shortly.

61. **Ms. Horsington** (Australia) said that her Government's national apology to indigenous people in 2008 and its support for the Declaration, announced in 2009, had improved the relationship between the Government and the indigenous peoples of Australia. Under a Government strategy to close the gap of indigenous disadvantage in health, housing, education and employment, over 1,100 houses had been built or refurbished, over 3,500 young indigenous Australians had received support to complete their final year of secondary school, over 16,000 indigenous Australians had commenced employment and over 12,000 had begun vocational training.

62. The National Congress of Australia's First Peoples had held its first forum in 2011. The Congress provided an independent national vehicle for indigenous people to participate in decision-making. It consisted of 120 delegates from across the country. A new national policy on multiculturalism embraced the principles of valuing diversity, maintaining social cohesion, communicating the benefits of Australia's diversity and responding to intolerance. Australia had actively supported Bolivia in organizing the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples.

63. The distinguished Australian aboriginal human rights scholar Professor Megan Davis had begun her three-year term as a member of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in 2011. She was a leading scholar of indigenous legal rights and international law who had been active in the United Nations as an advocate for indigenous rights, particularly in relation to indigenous women.

64. For the first time, the youth delegate of Australia to the United Nations was an indigenous Australian. Australia would soon appoint an indigenous person as its Permanent Representative to the United Nations. Australia had recently contributed 100,000 dollars to the Trust Fund on Indigenous Populations to support the participation of indigenous representatives in international meetings. Australia was also contributing to a World Intellectual Property Organization fund to support indigenous participation in negotiations on a new international instrument to protect genetic resources.

65. **Ms. Zolotova** (Russian Federation) said that her country was home to over 160 different ethnic groups. The special status of small indigenous ethnicities was enshrined in Russian legislation. Their rights and cultural presentation were Government priorities. Conditions for the fair and universal development, choice and use of various native languages were provided for, as were the rights of ethnic groups to preserve their cultures and protect their historic homelands.

66. An annual competition was held for grants from the federal budget for media projects designed to preserve and develop the cultural heritage of small indigenous peoples. At the most recent session of the

Permanent Forum, the Russian Federation had provided support for a workshop on best practices drawn from cooperation between indigenous communities in the Russian Federation and industrial firms. Indigenous non-governmental organizations had participated in the workshop. The Russian Federation had hosted a conference in St. Petersburg in 2010 on intellectual property protection of traditional indigenous knowledge. Indigenous people and experts from over 30 countries had participated.

67. **Mr. Heshiki** (Japan) said that in 2008, the Diet of Japan had unanimously adopted a resolution calling for recognition of the Ainu as indigenous people and adoption of comprehensive policies for them. The Government had recognized that the Ainu people had their own language, religion and culture and that they were indigenous inhabitants of the northern part of Japan, particularly Hokkaido.

68. The Government of Japan had set up an advisory panel that included high-level experts and a representative of the Ainu people. The panel had proposed measures in the areas of education, revitalization of Ainu culture and industrial development. The Government had also established a policy council in which several Ainu representatives, including women, took active part. The council was working on a project to build a national centre to promote respect for the culture of the Ainu people and was collecting data on living conditions of the Ainu people outside of Hokkaido.

69. **Ms. Valle Camino** (Cuba) said that the oppression of indigenous people in Cuba by colonizers had been so severe that no indigenous people remained.

70. One of the main rights which must be defended was the right of indigenous peoples to freely choose their political status and have access to economic, social and cultural development. Cuba reaffirmed the right of the indigenous peoples of the Andes to the full enjoyment of their ancient, traditional rights, including the right to chew the coca leaf. Cuba recognized the right of the Government of Bolivia to protect that practice for its people.

71. It was unacceptable to try to incorporate the human rights of indigenous peoples under the Declaration into development parameters which were rejected by the majority of those peoples as alien to their way of life and their needs. Genuine implementation of those rights in accordance with the real needs of those peoples and their interests was called for.

72. **Mr. Grunditz** (Sweden), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, said that some indigenous people were subject to human rights violations, including violence, in some cases, as a result of defending their rights. Indigenous women suffered from multiple discrimination, within their own communities as well as within the larger society.

73. Some confusion remained about the roles and functions of the three United Nations entities established to address indigenous issues, as well as about indigenous peoples' place within the institutional structure of the United Nations, as they were not always organized as non-governmental organizations. The report of the Secretary-General on promoting participation at the United Nations of recognized indigenous peoples' representatives and on the organization of such participation would be received with interest. The Nordic countries welcomed the establishment in 2011 of the United Nations Indigenous Peoples' Partnership, an inter-agency initiative which would contribute to mainstreaming indigenous rights within the United Nations system and delivering tangible progress at the country level.

74. The Special Rapporteur had recently visited the Sápmi region. He had noted that Finland, Norway and Sweden attached great importance to indigenous issues. The third negotiation on the Nordic Saami Convention would soon take place.

75. All the Nordic countries were members of the Arctic Council, a high-level consensus forum for cooperation and interaction between States and Arctic peoples, where indigenous peoples participated on an equal footing with Governments.

76 **Mr. Chuquihuara** (Peru) said that for 11 years Peru had consistently led the process to develop the Declaration, which testified to its strong commitment to the rights of indigenous peoples. Recently, a law on prior consultation with indigenous and tribal peoples had entered into force, following unanimous approval by the Congress of Peru. It was fully in accordance with ILO Convention No. 169. The Special Rapporteur had played an important role in the development of that law.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.